REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-35, 37-38 and 40-63 are pending in the application, Claims 1-31 and 52-63 having previously been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 32, 35, 41 and 49-51 are amended by the present amendment. Support for the amended claims can be found in the original specification, claims and drawings.[1] No new matter is presented.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 32-35, 37-38, 40-47, 49, 50 and 51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Brozowski et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,559,871, hereinafter Brozowski); and Claim 48 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Brozowski.

In response to the rejection based on Brozowski, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claims 32, 35, 41 and 49-51 recite novel features clearly not taught or rendered obvious by the applied references.

As discussed in detail in the amendment filed October 27, 2005, the pending independent claims related to an object content structure management method/computer program product for managing a content structure of a root object which includes attribute data corresponding to a media file.

Specifically, Claim 32 is amended to recite, *inter alia*,

> ... said first and second lists of child objects hold
> instances of all objects actually existing as said child objects
> and placeholders indicating objects that *no portions thereof*
> *exist*, but which can exist as said child objects...

Independent Claims 35, 41 and 49-51, while directed to alternative embodiments, are amended to recite substantially similar features. Accordingly, the remarks presented below are applicable to each of amended independent Claims 32, 35, 41 and 49-51.

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[1] e.g., specification, at least at p. 62, lines 10-19 and Fig. 38.

As described in an exemplary embodiment at p. 62, lines 10-19 and Fig. 38, a node indicating an actually existing instance object is denoted by an icon "occupied" and a node indicating an object that is not actually held, but could be held, is denoted by the icon "vacant."

Turning to the applied references, Brozowski describes an asynchronous tree navigator graphical user interface, which allows a user to asynchronously query for data and display the results of said query.[2]

Brozowski, however, fails to teach or suggest an object structure that includes "placeholders indicating objects that *no portions thereof exist*, but which can exist as said child objects" as recited in amended independent Claim 32.

In addressing the "placeholder" feature in the "Response to Arguments" section, the Official Action cites col. 13, lines 21-48 of Brozowski, and states that "placeholder objects are used as the data is loading. They represent the final loaded objects, however they are not the actually fully loaded objects but merely placeholders while the actual object is being loaded. They indicate that data can and will exist there" (emphasis added). Further, at col. 13, lines 21-26, Brozowski describes that "once partial data is received... the data which is available may be loaded into the tree navigator user interface... Thereafter a placeholder object may be displayed in the tree view display" (emphasis added). The reference further describes that term "placeholder object" refers to an object that provides information regarding the loading status of an object. The outstanding Official Action appears to acknowledge this partial loading of data by asserting that "an object can not be called an object until it is fully received," and "[w]hile it is true that some data is received before hand, no object exists because partial data does not make an object..." (emphasis added).

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[2] Brozowski, Abstract.

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In contrast, independent Claim 32 is amended to recite an object structure that includes "placeholders indicating objects that *no portions thereof exist*, but which can exist as said child objects." As described in an exemplary embodiment at p. 62, lines 10-19, the placeholder is "vacant" and therefore does not include any portion of data relating to an object.

As noted above, Brozowski fails to teach or suggest an object structure that includes "placeholders indicating objects that *no portions thereof exist*, but which can exist as said child objects," since at least a portion of an object in Brozowski must be generated in order to create a placeholder.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons discussed above, applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of independent Claims 32, 35, 41 and 49-51 (and the claims that respectively depend therefrom) under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (and 35 U.S.C. § 103 in the case of Claim 48) be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 32-35, 37-38 and 40-51 is definite and patentably distinguishing over the applied references. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of the application is therefore requested.
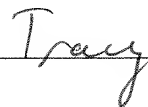
Respectfully submitted,

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